An Alarm to a careleſs World.

A

DISCOURSE

Occaſioned by the late

EARTHQUAKES,

Preached *November* 30, 1755,

BEING THE

First *SUNDAY* in ADVENT,

AT

St. *DUNSTAN*'s *in the WEST*.

The THIRD EDITION.

By WILLIAM ROMAINE, *Lecturer.*

Watch therefore, for ye know neither the Day nor the Hour wherein the Son of Man cometh. Matt. xxv. 13.

LONDON:

Printed for J. WORRALL, at the *Dove* in *Bell-yard*, near *Lincoln's-Inn*; E. WITHERS, at the *Seven Stars*, near the *Temple-Gate* in *Fleet-ſtreet*; and R. WITHY and J. RYALL, at *Hogarth's-Head*, oppoſite *Saliſbury-court*, *Fleet-ſtreet*. MDCCLV.

(Price Six-Pence.)

BRITISH MUSEUM

AMOS iv. 12.

Prepare to meet thy GOD.

THE church calls upon us, by the preſent ſolemnity, to bring into our moſt ſerious thoughts the advent of our bleſſed Lord in the fleſh, when he came to viſit us in great humility. He appeared upon earth in the character of a meek, ſuffering, dying Saviour. But there is another advent, not far off, when all fleſh ſhall ſee him in the majeſty of the Godhead. His firſt advent was in the loweſt humiliation, his ſecond advent will be in the higheſt exaltation. And we wait for that great day, when he will come again in his glorious majeſty to judge both the quick and the dead, hoping to be found, when he comes, watching and praying, that we may riſe with him to the life immortal.

We do not pretend to know the preciſe time of his coming: for *of that day, and that hour, knoweth no man*, but the judge himſelf has given us ſome ſigns and marks,

by which we might be as certain, that he is nigh and ſtandeth before the door, as that ſummer is nigh, when the fig-tree putteth forth her green figs. And whenever we ſee theſe ſcripture ſigns and marks, it is our office and duty, as faithful watchmen, to give you notice, that you may be ready, leaſt your Lord ſhould come in a day, when ye look not for him, and in an hour that ye are not aware of, and ſhould cut you aſunder, and appoint you your portion with the hypocrites, there ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of teeth. On this account the ſubject, appointed by the church for this day, falls in ſeaſonably with theſe remarkable providences, which have been lately manifeſted in this and other countries. And I have therefore choſen a ſcripture proper to awaken your attention to the ſecond advent of Chriſt. It is exceedingly awful and ſolemn. The very reading of it muſt make a deep impreſſion upon every ſerious mind. *Prepare to meet thy God*, the eternal and almighty God, who is coming in all his glory to judgment, and if the righteous ſcarcely be ſaved in that great day, where ſhall the wicked and the infidel appear? They will then have no excuſe for their ſins — ſelf-condemned they will ſtand with guilt and horror before his tribunal, to hear their ſentence of condemnation paſt, which is never never to be reverſed. So that unleſs an

eternity

eternity of pain and miſery be the beſt thing we can work out in our ſhort life, we ſhould now think of making ſome proviſion for an eternity of happineſs. We ſhould now be preparing to meet our God. As we muſt meet him ſoon, it ſhould be our whole buſineſs to get ready and to be prepared, that whenever he comes we may enter in with him into the joy of our Lord. This is the inſtruction which I ſhall draw from the Text, *Prepare to meet thy God.*

Firſt, We here learn that God our Saviour, who once came in great humility to viſit us, is now preparing to meet us in judgment. And,

Secondly, We ſhould therefore be prepared to meet him. And,

Thirdly, I ſhall endeavour to ſtir you up to the true goſpel preparation, that whenever our Saviour comes, you may lift up your heads with joy, knowing that your redemption draweth nigh. And

May the ever bleſſed Spirit, from whom the preparation muſt come, aſſiſt us with his grace, that our meditation firſt upon our Saviour's preparing to meet us in judgment, may be the means of preparing us to meet him. *Prepare to meet thy God.*

The

The ſuffering Jeſus was united to the eternal God, and ſo united that as the reaſonable ſoul and fleſh are one man, ſo God and man are one Chriſt. At his firſt coming he viſited us in great humility, and the Godhead was veiled under a covering of fleſh, but at his ſecond coming all fleſh ſhall ſee that Jeſus is God indeed. Every eye ſhall then behold the divine glory of the ſuffering Saviour, and they who once pierced him at his bitter paſſion, or ſince with their horrid blaſphemies, ſhall then confeſs to their everlaſting ſhame, that he is the almighty God of heaven and earth. On this account we ſhould be prepared to meet him. At the time appointed he came to ſuffer for the ſins of the World, and at the time appointed he will come to judgment. His ſecond advent is as certain as his firſt. It was foretold in the old teſtament, and promiſed in the new, and the ſcriptures cannot be broken. God had revealed it in the cleareſt manner to the patriarchs, ſo that *Enoch* the 7th from *Adam* prophecied of it, ſaying — *Behold the Lord cometh with ten thouſand of his ſaints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard ſpeeches, which ungodly ſinners have ſpoken againſt him.* The Father of the faithful knew that he was to come to execute

judgment

judgment upon all, and ſpeaks with confidence, *ſhall not the judge of all the earth do right?* and *Job* had the ſame holy confidence, when *he made his ſupplication to his judge*, and the ſolemnity of his coming to judgment, *Solomon* being a prophet foreſaw, and has plainly deſcribed it in theſe words — *God ſhall bring every work into judgment, with every ſecret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.* And the judge himſelf has given us a very circumſtantial deſcription in three of the evangeliſts of the proceſs of the great day, and has called upon us again and again, to be always ready and prepared for it. His apoſtles argue from the certainty of our appearing before the judgment ſeat of Chriſt, and frequently make uſe of theſe terrors of the Lord to perſuade men to faith and repentance. And there is a very remarkable circumſtance, which gives great weight to theſe authorities; when our Lord is deſcribing the general judgment, he confirms his account with a promiſe, that he would come to judge the jewiſh nation, before that generation ſhould paſs away. Accordingly he came; and there has not a tittle failed of what he foretold concerning the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, or concerning the diſperſion of the *Jews* over the face of the earth. It is then a matter of fact, that he has already acted as judge, and he will come to complete his office. It is not more certain,

tain, that the ſun will riſe to-morrow, than that he who judged the jewiſh nation, will ſoon come to judge the whole earth. His ſecond advent is fixed and determined to the fulneſs of time, as well as the firſt was. He will come in his glorious majeſty at the laſt day. And in the mean time he comes with many ſignal ſtrokes of vengeance to awaken a careleſs ſleepy world. He viſits the inhabitants of the earth with his judgments, that they may learn righteouſneſs, and he has lately viſited us with ſome of his heavieſt judgments, and I hope many of you have been ſtirred up by them to prepare to meet your God. And it is high time we ſhould be all prepared: for the marks and ſigns of his ſecond advent are fulfilling daily. His coming cannot be far off. The day indeed and the hour are not known, but if you will compare the uncommon events, which our Lord ſays were to be the fore-runners of his coming to judgment, with what has lately happened in the world; you muſt conclude, that the time is at hand. He foretells us, that there ſhould then be wars and rumours of wars: and are there not wars, and rumours of more wars? There were to be peſtilences, and we have had the peſtilence for more than ten years in this kingdom. There were to be great earthquakes in diverſe places, and there have been earthquakes lately in many parts of the world, and in a

far

far greater number than they ever were in any other age. And theſe earthquakes were to be attended with fearful ſights, and did not many fearful ſights in the element attend the two laſt earthquakes we had in this city? But the worſt ſign of all is the preſent decay of religion among us; this renders the reſt more terrible, and makes it to be feared, that as we are ripe for deſtruction, ſo we may ſoon expect to have our candleſtick removed: *for when the Son of man cometh, ſhall he find faith upon the earth?* ſays Chriſt. There will be ſo little, that he ſhall ſcarce find any. The true ſaving faith will be diminiſhed from among the children of men; and it has for ſome time been baniſhed out of the popiſh countries, and the reformed churches have lately fallen ſadly from the faith, and have preſerved very little more of chriſtianity, than the mere name: and in our own church we have kept up the form of godlineſs, but we are ſo far from having the power, that we deny any perſons can have it, and the few, who ſay they have it, are treated as madmen and enthuſiaſts. Theſe are ſome of the infallible ſigns of our Lord's ſecond advent. From them we are aſſured that it is not at a great diſtance. When we behold the fig-tree, and all the trees ſhooting forth, then we know that ſummer is near; and ſo likewiſe, when we ſee theſe things come to paſs, we know that

the

the kingdom of God is nigh at hand. It will not be long before the Son of man will come in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory, and becauſe we are aſſured that he will come ſoon, and yet know not the day nor the hour, we are therefore always waiting with watchfulneſs and prayer. Our Lord required us to be always in this devout frame of mind, when he cloſed the volume of revelation with theſe words, *ſurely I come quickly* — *ſurely*, ſays the Almighty Judge, *I come quickly* to judgment — to which the faithful reply, *Amen, even ſo come Lord Jeſus.* Happy would it be for us all, if we were ſo well prepared to meet our God, that when we ſee the ſigns of his coming ſpeedily, and hear him promiſe, *ſurely I come quickly*, then we might give our *Amen, even ſo come Lord Jeſus.* And are you then, my brethren, not only ready, but alſo praying for his coming? Do you wait for it with faith, and are you looking for that bleſſed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt? If you are in this happy ſtate, then you can cry out with joy, Lord we believe the promiſes, and we ſee the ſigns of thy ſpeedy coming, even ſo, come Lord Jeſus. But if you are not in this happy ſtate, then I proceed

Secondly, To ſhew, that ſince Chriſt will ſoon come to judgment, you ought there-

fore

fore to be prepared to meet your God. He will come in all the glory of the Godhead, attended with the multitude of the heavenly hoſt, and before him ſhall be gathered all nations. Every one of us muſt appear before his tribunal. We muſt meet the almighty God in judgment, when he cometh to take vengeance of his adverſaries: and ought we not to be prepared for this awful meeting? We cannot reſiſt the Almighty — we cannot fly from his preſence — we cannot conceal one ſecret thought from him, and is it not then our intereſt to make the almighty Judge our friend? For what king going to make war againſt another king, ſitteth not down firſt, and conſulteth whether he be able with ten thouſand to meet him that cometh againſt him with twenty thouſand; or elſe while the other is yet a great way off, he ſendeth an embaſſage, and deſireth conditions of peace. When the king of kings cometh againſt you, armed with his omnipotence, you can have no hopes of ſafety, but in deſiring conditions of peace. Your only way is to ſubmit, and to try to make him your friend. Then you will be ſafe. So ſoon as you have ſecured the friendſhip of the ſovereign Judge, and are under the protection of his almighty power, then you are prepared to meet him in judgment; and therefore ſince this preparation is the principal buſineſs of life, we

ought to labour to ſecure his friendſhip, as the means to it. And how then ſhall we make him our friend? Sin made him our enemy, and it is the guilt of ſin in the conſcience, which makes his coming to judgment terrible, and will make the eternal puniſhment of ſin terrible indeed. Take away ſin, and God is reconciled. Let the ſoul be cleanſed from the pollution, and the conſcience purged from the guilt of ſin, and there will no fear remain of condemnation. The Judge will then be the Saviour, and we ſhall have no dread of his judgment, having already received the bleſſings of his ſalvation.

The goſpel has propoſed a plain method of bringing the mind into this happy ſtate, and it is generally effected in the following manner. While the ſinner lies ſecure in ſin, he cannot be prepared to meet his God. He muſt be awakened. He muſt be deeply convinced of his guilt and danger, and under the ſenſe of them, he muſt be humbled to the very duſt. Theſe are the firſt ſteps towards his preparation. The holy Spirit has now opened his eyes, and he ſees his loſt ruined condition. He beholds the God of nature at enmity with him, and all the powers in nature combined to deſtroy him, and if he be ever ſaved, it muſt be all free mercy: for in himſelf he is miſerable and helpleſs, and therefore not daring to look up unto heaven, he ſmites upon his breaſt, ſaying,

ing, *God be merciful unto me a ſinner.* Under theſe convictions he labours, which though painful for a time, yet being the door and entrance into ſalvation, are therefore a bleſſing, and the greater bleſſing, as they are the general way, by which God brings ſinners unto himſelf: for the deeper and more diſtreſſing theſe convictions of ſin are, the greater neceſſity will the ſinner find of mercy, and the more earneſtly will he ſeek, until he obtain it. And he has the infallible promiſe of God to encourage his ſeeking, *bleſſed are they that hunger and thirſt after righteouſneſs, for they ſhall be filled.* In God's own good time he begins to find his intereſt in this promiſe: he has faith to apply it to himſelf: he finds his ſoul filled with the righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt, and has the love of God ſhed abroad in his heart by the holy Ghoſt, giving him all joy and peace in believing. And the ſenſe of this pardoning love caſteth out fear: for now he knows aſſuredly that Jeſus Chriſt is his Saviour and his God: he finds daily proof of it in the change of his life and converſation. His will is now ſo intirely renewed, that he loves and delights to do the will of God, and he has grace and ſtrength to run the way of his commandments; in which he will be found watching and praying, whenever his Lord comes, and will therefore be

always ready and prepared to go forth to meet him.

In this method the goſpel prepares us to meet our God: It firſt convinces us of our ſinful ſtate, in which we are at enmity with God, and are not prepared to meet him; and then convinces us of our reconciliation with him, of which we have the inward witneſs of the holy Spirit, bearing his teſtimony with our Spirits, that we are the children of God, and we have the outward witneſs of our lives and converſations, which we are able to conform to the rule of God's commandments. And then we have no doubt of our intereſt in the almighty Judge: for he has waſhed us from our ſins in his blood, and has cloathed us with his all-perfect righteouſneſs, and having thus ſaved us from our ſins, we are thereby ſaved from the fear of judgment. And what can we then fear? Our Saviour is the judge — his omnipotence is our protection — he comes in all his glory to take us up with him into his heaven, and to make us partakers of his everlaſting joys. Bleſſed and for ever bleſſed are they, who are thus prepared to meet their God.

And are you then prepared in this manner? Have you ſecured the friendſhip of the Judge, ſo that whenever he comes you are ready to meet him? An eternity of happineſs or miſery depends on your preparation,

and

and therefore I hope the vaſt importance of the ſubject will command your attention, while I am endeavouring under the

Third and laſt head, to apply what has been ſaid as a motive to ſtir you up to be always prepared to meet your God. You have heard the character of the Judge. He is the high and lofty one that inhabiteth eternity — the Lord of Hoſts is his name. He is the almighty Creator of all things viſible and inviſible — when he ſpake the word, they were made — He commanded and they ſtood faſt — His providence ruleth over them all, and he upholdeth them by the word of his power. And this eternal, infinite and almighty God hath appointed a day, wherein he will be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction from the preſence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. Such is the glorious majeſty of the Judge! And are you prepared to meet him? Have you no fear nor dread in your minds, if he ſhould come this night? If you ſhould this moment hear the loud trump of God calling the world to judgment, and ſhould ſee the Lord of heaven and earth coming with thouſands and ten thouſands of angels and ſaints, how would it affect you? Conſider, whether

you

you could ſtand the ſhock? Look into your hearts, and ſee if you be this moment in the very ſtate, in which you would wiſh to appear before Chriſt's tribunal. Put the queſtion to yourſelves, ſuppoſe the Judge were to come this hour, am I prepared to meet my God? If you are prepared, you are happy. But if not, you are and will be miſerable, unleſs I can perſuade you to ſeek an intereſt in the Judge. And this I will attempt in the help of God, under two or three ſhort remarks,

Firſt, To them who do not believe the doctrine. Theſe are deiſts and profeſt infidels, the open enemies of Jehovah and his Chriſt, who having denied him to be God, think they are out of the reach of his judgment. I hope there are not many of them here preſent. Some perhaps there may be; for I know they are terribly affrighted at the late earthquakes, and their leaders have no way to quiet their conſciences, but to aſſure them that they are mere natural effects, produced by natural cauſes; as if it were leſs terrible to be deſtroyed by a natural cauſe, than to be deſtroyed by the God of nature. Poor little philoſophers! in what a deſpicable light do they appear, who are forced to exclude a providence, in order to get rid of their fears? And ſo for ſafety, they take ſhelter in atheiſm: And let them talk ever ſo much of one ſupreme being, yet they

they are rank atheiſts; for their one ſupreme being is one ſupreme nothing. God has been pleaſed to reveal his eſſence and perſonality to us, and his revealed account of himſelf they deny, and conſequently whatever they ſet up againſt him, be it a God in one perſon, or thirty thouſand Gods, it is all a mere imagination, a one ſupreme being without any exiſtence. No wonder, they ſhould live looſe libertine lives, ſince they are without God in the world. And what can we do but pity and pray for theſe men, who have adopted this ſyſtem of practical atheiſm? Oh that the eternal Spirit would open their eyes, and if they have but a glimpſe of truth, they will ſee that Jeſus is God. And if they will not confeſs him here before men, there is a day coming, when they ſhall confeſs that he is a God indeed. At the glory of his appearance, theſe bold blaſphemers, who now ridicule his divinity, will then be calling to the mountains to fall on them, and to the hills to cover them. The majeſty of God the almighty Judge will ſtrike them with terror, and when they are called before his throne, to give an account of the hard ſpeeches, which they had ſpoken againſt him, they will ſtand guilty, and trembling, waiting for that righteous ſentence, which will carry with it inexpreſſible miſery, *Go ye curſed into everlaſting fire, prepared for the devil and*

and his angels. Oh that theſe terrors of the Lord may ſink deep into the heart of every unbeliever, who is now at open war with his Judge, while I am,

Secondly, Addreſſing myſelf to the careleſs ſinners among you, who are, I fear, a great number. The generality of them who profeſs chriſtianity live to this world, and ſeldom think about the next. Their pleaſures and diverſions are the chief object of their purſuit, and money and honour and power are ſought after, that they may enjoy themſelves the better. All worldly men are upon this ſcheme; and while they purſue it, they go on ſecurely in their ſins, and are careleſs about the concerns of eternity. Their hearts are engaged upon other matters, than preparing to meet their God. Their attachment to the world is the greateſt obſtacle to their preparation, and therefore we are forbidden to *love the world, or the things of the world, for if any man love the world, the love of the father is not in him.* And if the love of God be not in us, we cannot be prepared to meet him in judgment.

Conſider this all ye who ſpeak peace to your ſouls, while you indulge yourſelves in ſin. You believe that God will call you before his judgment-ſeat, and that if you live and die in your ſins, you cannot eſcape the eternal puniſhment of them. You know

not

not but the Judge may call you before him this night, and you are not prepared, and yet you have no concern about it. You ſin on with the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt before your eyes, to which you may be brought before the next act of ſin be finiſhed. What can we think of this unaccountable conduct? Certainly men in their ſober ſenſes cannot act ſuch an abſurd part. It is againſt reaſon: for if theſe very men were ſetting out upon a journey of two or three hundred miles, they would make more preparation than they do for eternity. It is againſt ſelf-intereſt: for who would take ſome preſent empty indulgences of ſin, as an equivalent for eternal happineſs? It is againſt all principles of good ſenſe to prefer ſin to holineſs, and to chooſe hell before heaven. And it is deſtroying religion, whoſe ſole buſineſs it is to prepare the ſoul to meet its God. And are any of you, my brethren, in this ſtrange careleſs ſtate? Do you act thus againſt reaſon and ſelf-intereſt, againſt common ſenſe and religion? You are guilty of all theſe inconſiſtences, if the Judge ſhould come in an hour, when ye look not for him. And he may come and find you unprepared as you are at preſent. You cannot promiſe yourſelves an hour to prepare in. His judgments are now in the earth, and they are ſent to rouſe you out of your ſecurity. Oh that you would be awakened by them

and ſee your danger. Do you not ſuppoſe, that the inhabitants of *Liſbon* thought themſelves as ſafe as you may do at preſent? They had no apprehenſions of an earthquake. They did not imagine that God was going to deſtroy them that morning. But you hear how they were ſurprized and overthrown with a great deſtruction. While they were ſpeaking, peace, peace, unto themſelves, they were called and hurried in a moment to judgment. One had ſet his heart upon getting an handſome fortune, and was juſt ſitting down to caſt up his accounts, and he was cut off that moment, and called to judgment with a ſoul full of the love of money. Another intent upon his pleaſures was feeding his imagination with a vile ſcene of indulgences, and his filthy ſoul was taken in the midſt of this impurity, and brought before the all pure and holy God. One with an oath in his mouth was calling for damnation upon his ſoul, and it came while the words were in his mouth, and down he ſunk into the pit of hell. Dreadful it is to think of the manner, in which they were ſurprized and cut off in their ſins. Suppoſe ſuch a judgment ſhould be ſent to this city at the ſame time of the day, how would it overtake ſinners both high and low? The great, tired with the diverſions of the preceding day, would be ſurprized in their ſleep, and would awake in the

the eternal world full of hatred to Jeſus Chriſt, and his people, and his holy faith. What can they expect from the Judge? And the lower people would be up, but at the devil's work, going on careleſs in their ſins, lying, and curſing, and ſwearing, and blaſpheming God, and ſnatched away with ſome horrid imprecation in their mouths. Why may not this happen to you, as well as to the inhabitants of *Liſbon?* Why may you not be thus cut off, and die in your ſins, yea in the very act of ſin? You have more reaſon to fear it, than they had: for your ſins are greater than theirs. Think not that they were ſinners above all the inhabitants of the earth, becauſe they ſuffered ſuch things. I tell you, nay; but except you repent, you ſhall all likewiſe periſh. The ſame immoralities which reigned among them, reign alſo in this city; but the contempt of Jeſus Chriſt, and his religion, and the oppoſition now made to the progreſs of the goſpel by every method, but ſheding of blood, from which God withholds the enemies hands, theſe are crimes of a deeper guilt, than the unhappy *Portugueze* had to anſwer for. The common people in thoſe popiſh countries are kept in great ignorance, they have not the light of the goſpel ſhining clearly among them, as you have, and therefore they were not guilty of that one damnable ſin, which makes all your other ſins ſo ex-

ceeding ſinful. You ſin againſt the fulleſt conviction; you reject the light of the goſpel in your underſtandings, and you act againſt it in your lives; and you ſin on, when you are invited to forſake your ſins and live. God ſends his miniſters to plead with you, but their counſel you reject with contempt. His good Spirit ſtrives with you, but you reſiſt and grieve him. You have the ſcriptures in your hands, and you may there read the danger of your careleſs way of life, but the ſcripture has no influence. If none of theſe motives can prevail, be aſſured, that your guilt will increaſe in proportion to the advantages you enjoy; and the more reaſon there was for your being prepared to meet your God, the heavier will the condemnation be, if he ſhould come and find you unprepared. May you lay theſe things to heart, and by the grace of the holy Spirit, now reſolve to prepare for the coming of our almighty God and Saviour.

And if you have any deſire to be prepared, there is one motive which ought to have great weight with you, and it is taken from a matter of fact. There are, God be praiſed, many perſons in this city, ſeveral I hope in this Congregation, who have obtained the love and friendſhip of the ſupreme Judge. Look into their lives, and examine them cloſely. See how they are affected with the report of theſe judgments,

which

which are now in the earth. You will find no dread, or fear in their minds. They are not afraid of any evil tidings. The inward peace and joy, which ariſe from the ſenſe of God's loving them in Chriſt Jeſus, are not leſſened by any outward calamity. They know that he, who is the Lord of nature, will make all things work together for their good, and therefore their heart is eſtabliſhed and will not ſhrink, though the earth ſhould quake from its very foundations, and the hills ſhould be carried into the midſt of the ſea. If the whole courſe of nature ſhould be diſturbed, they have nothing to fear. God is their friend. They are kept by the arms of the Almighty, and if the heavens ſhould paſs away, and the earth, and all that is therein ſhould be burnt up, yet ſtill they are ſafe. In life and death they can ſtay their minds upon God in perfect peace. You cannot deny, that there are Chriſtians in this ſafe and happy ſtate: for God has promiſed it them, and we declare that God is faithful and true. And if you believe it, how does it affect you? Do you find no deſire to be as ſafe and happy as they are. Does no wiſh ariſe in your hearts, that you might be under the protection of the almighty God, and that he would ſet you on high out of the reach of publick calamity; ſo that whenever he comes to viſit a ſinful people laden with

with iniquity, and to be glorified in their deſtruction, then you may rejoice and be exceeding glad, knowing aſſuredly that your eternal redemption is at hand.

Lay all theſe conſiderations together, and they may ſtrengthen your good reſolutions. God is preparing to meet you in judgment, and eternity depends on your being prepared to meet him. You have no time to loſe. He may come this night. And you are not prepared. What would your condition be, if he ſhould call you unprepared? Therefore as you love your ſouls, apply to him this moment. Now go to the throne of grace for pardon, leſt you ſhould be called before the throne of glory unpardoned. Cry aloud for mercy. The Judge may ſtill be intreated. Oh plead with him then, and be importunate, until he become your friend. Remind him of his love to ſinners. Urge his bloody ſweat, his bitter croſs and paſſion, his cruel mockings, buffetings, and ſcourgings, endured all for ſinners. Plead theſe with him, and lay before him the torments and the ſhame of the croſs, and the piercing of his hands and feet, which are the engraving of his love to ſinners, and be aſſured that tender heart cannot want love for them, which bled to death for their ſalvation. Hold on this plea, until he be gracious. Place your whole truſt and confidence in the ſufferings and death of Jeſus Chriſt, and doubt not but he will hear your

your plea, and will give you ſuch a taſte of his pardoning love, and ſo fill you with his graces, that you will be prepared to meet your God.

I hope he has heard my prayers for you this day, and if it be his bleſſed will has diſpoſed you to ſeek an intereſt in the Judge of all the earth. He will come to judgment, and quickly. May the holy Spirit prepare us all to meet him. Oh! if he ſhould come this night, how would he find you. Are you all ready? Is every one of you fit to die? Have you all got your lamps trimmed, and ye yourſelves prepared; that if there ſhould be a great cry made at midnight, Behold the bridegroom cometh, ye may be ready, and enter in with him to the marriage. And if he ſhould call you by an earthquake, or by any other judgment, have you ſo ſure an intereſt in him, that ſudden death would be welcome? Think what an awful thing it would be, if you were to enter upon the eternal world this night, where your ſtate is unalterably fixed for ever. O what continual preparation ſhould you be making for eternity? For if you die unprepared, all is loſt. Hell and torments are your everlaſting portion. And if you are not quite in love with miſery, now beg of God to ſhew you your danger, and to deliver you from it. The door of mercy is ſtill open. Oh that you may find an entrance, and preſs forwards

wards with an holy violence, until you receive grace to prepare you to meet your God. And let us all agree to look up to him for it, in that excellent form of prayer, which our Church has appointed for this day.

" Almighty God give us grace, that we " may caſt away the works of darkneſs, and " put upon us the armour of light, now in the " time of this mortal life, in which thy Son " Jeſus Chriſt came to viſit us in great hu- " mility; that in the laſt day, when he ſhall " come again in his glorious majeſty to judge " both the quick and dead, we may *(be* " *prepared to meet him and may)* riſe to the " life immortal, through him who liveth " and reigneth with Thee and the Holy " Ghoſt now and ever. *Amen.*"

F I N I S.